

**Commission on Civics Education
Tuesday, December 11, 2007
Virginia Historical Society
Richmond, Virginia
10 a.m.**

Meeting Summary

The Commission on Civics Education, established by House Bill 1769 as an advisory commission in the executive branch of state government, held its eighth meeting on December 11, 2007.

Members Present

Dr. Stephen G. Bragaw
Thomas C. Coen
The Honorable James H. Dillard, II
Jeffrey Finch
Dr. Sheila G. Hill
Glen H. Hoptman
The Honorable William Roscoe Reynolds
J. Westwood Smithers, Jr.
The Honorable Robert Tata
Kathryn Williams

Members Absent

The Honorable Kenneth C. Alexander
The Honorable Frederick M. Quayle
The Honorable Beverly J. Sherwood
Ginger Stanley
Kenneth S. Stroupe, Jr.
Richard C. Sullivan, Jr.
The Honorable R. Lee Ware, Jr.

Other Persons in Attendance

Clint Hubbard
Doug Pond

Ex-Officio Present

Jean Bankos (Designee for The Honorable Timothy M. Kaine)
Alison Landry (Designee for The Honorable Robert F. McDonnell)
Dr. Barbara A. Perry
Dr. Linda Wallinger (Designee for Dr. Billy K. Cannaday, Jr.)

Ex-Officio Absent

Dr. Mark E. Emblidge
Jeremy Greenfield (Designee for The Honorable Bill Bolling)

Department of Education

Betsy Barton
Joel M. Dexter
Beverly Thurston

Welcome

Glen Hoptman called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. and completed the roll call. The minutes from the August 3, 2007, meeting of the Commission on Civics Education were approved.

Presentations and Discussions

Dr. Stephen Bragaw:

- Presented information about the *Virginia Civics Education Summit*.
 - The summit was located at the Capitol Building on September 20, 2007, during Civics Week and was organized within a short time frame.
 - A standing-room audience of over 120 teachers attended the *Summit*.

- The summit had the added benefit of showcasing the improvements to the Capitol Building and the tour of the building was well attended.
- Speakers included the First Lady of Virginia, the Secretary of Education, Dr. Michael Cornfield, Professor Julie O'Sullivan, and Dean Robert Holsworth.
- Virginia Tech provided conference services.

The Honorable James H. Dillard:

- Continued the presentation on the *Virginia Civics Education Summit*.
 - The teacher-to-teacher contact and discussions were productive and should be continued during a summit next year.
 - The proposed budget for a 2008 *Summit* was suggested at \$20,000 to \$22,000.
 - Most of this year's speakers did not charge a speaker's fee.
 - In the future, speakers may charge for services and the event might be broadcast.

There was discussion of alternative means of planning, presenting, and financing a *Virginia Civics Education Summit* for 2008. The Civics Commission expires in June 2008 and there was a question about whether the summit can continue without the Civics Commission as the sponsor. Some members proposed holding a discussion by noted political commentators from Virginia and televising the proceedings via broadcast or closed circuit television and Web casting. It was thought that another summit would be especially pertinent during a presidential election year. Other members asked where the funding would be found. The Governor's budget will be presented shortly and a budget amendment was suggested as the best means of securing funding. Alternatively, funding might be found in the form of grants from major, local corporations. Several were listed as possibilities. Members also wondered if the Virginia Department of Education would continue to finance the Civics Commission or whether the Civics Commission could find other sources of revenue. Former Delegate Dillard was asked how the original resolution was written and he explained the process. A majority of the members decided to meet for a short time after adjournment and work on planning for the coming year's civics activities.

The Honorable James H. Dillard:

- Presented an update on the review of the *History and Social Science Standards of Learning*.
 - He said that the work of the subcommittee was excellent.
 - Many of the recommended proposals of the Civics Commission were included in the proposed revised *History and Social Science Standards of Learning*, particularly in *Civics and Economics* and *United States and Virginia Government*.
 - The draft of the proposed revised *History and Social Science Standards of Learning* will be presented for approval to the Board of Education in January 2008.
- Presented an update on the status of a possible Virginia civics textbook.

- Communication with the Chamber of Commerce on the topic is continuing.
- He suggested that there might be other ways of getting it published.

Discussion centered on finding a means for producing an equivalent to the *Good People of Virginia* and making it again available for use by Virginia's teachers. One suggestion was to involve the Center for Politics at the University of Virginia in creating it. Discussions are ongoing with Pearson/Prentice Hall for possible publication. George Mason University may also be interested in helping to create and publish such a textbook. Commission members also had questions about how textbooks are chosen to be placed on the Board of Education's approved textbook list. The general process was explained. It was suggested that there were two different approaches to get the ideas into print. One would be to produce a stand alone textbook on government in Virginia. Another would be to include a Virginia section in or supplement to an existing government textbook.

The Civics Commission then returned to exploring means for continuing the summit for at least one more year and proposed that the summit be planned and ready to execute if funding could be found. Questions arose concerning whether or not to have it underwritten from outside and who would be the responsible fiscal agent. Discussion will continue during the next meeting.

Adjournment

The Honorable Robert Tata adjourned the meeting at 11:56 a.m.